

several pathways to the American Dream and lifelong success.

BIDEN AGENDA AND CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, last week President Joe Biden delivered a strong State of the Union address focused on building a better America.

Our jobs recovery is strong and well underway, as noted by the most recent numbers, which shows unprecedented job growth so far under this President. More than 7.3 million jobs have been created by President Biden's very first year in office, even with the challenges posed by omicron and delta COVID variants. But we have so much more to do in this never-ending process of building a more perfect Union.

One area highlighted by the President was his desire to prioritize mental health needs in our country, particularly among our children. Our country faces an unprecedented mental health crisis in which our youth have been particularly impacted.

A number of mental health organizations have declared a youth mental health crisis and our surgeon general has issued an advisory calling it "an urgent public health crisis."

Today, I rise as we celebrate School Social Work Week, to talk about one way to help address that issue by supporting and investing in school social workers.

First, I just want to take an opportunity to thank our school social workers who work every single day to make a difference in the lives of their students and their families. School social workers are responsible for fostering students' social and emotional well-being so that they are ready to learn. As trained mental health professionals, social workers can deliver a wide spectrum of services, from building social skills to providing mental health support.

Their presence in our schools is invaluable and the support they provide for students is critical. I personally can attest to how school social workers make a difference. I would not be here if not for the support I received from a school social worker when I was a student.

Make no mistake, school social workers are key members of a school's educational team. Their expertise can help guide students through serious life challenges, including poverty, addiction, bullying, children whose parents are incarcerated, and even the military deployment of a family member.

It is more important, now more than ever, to reduce the barriers to mental health services for children, especially in our schools. As we do, improving access to school social workers must be a part of those efforts.

That is why later this week I will introduce, along with my very good

friend and former professional social worker, Representative BARBARA LEE of California, my School Social Workers Improving Student Success Act, as we create a grant to help schools hire additional social workers and retain existing school social workers.

There should be one social worker for every 250 students in most schools. In high-need schools, one social worker for every 50 students. Many schools struggle to meet these ratios.

My bill would also create a National Technical Assistance Center for school social work to help develop strategies for improving the effectiveness of school social work and help disseminate best practices.

Madam Speaker, I want to say thank you to the front-line school social workers for the hard work they put in every day to help our students succeed. It is going to be much more challenging after COVID.

I applaud the President for his commitment to take on mental health, especially among our youth, and to make it part of his unity agenda for the Nation that I believe colleagues on both sides of the aisle should be able to get behind.

I share his dedication to getting all Americans the mental health services they need. I look forward to seeing the proposals included in his fiscal year 2023 budget, including to help increase access to school-based medical health services in which school social workers will play a key role.

I sincerely hope that this House and this Congress can come together to address our children's mental health. Democrats continue to prioritize efforts to make our economy recover. I encourage all Members to consider our youth's mental health.

HONORING NATORRA MOODY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Natorra Moody for receiving the Alma-Bacon Georgia Library Employee of the Year award for 2021.

Natorra has exceptionally high standards for herself, of her coworkers, and of our library system, helping to maintain the highest caliber of public service.

She is dedicated to serving her community by leading programs such as a prom dress donation campaign which helps students who can't afford formal wear by allowing them to borrow the dresses freely from the library.

She regularly participates in community events as well to promote her library and the stellar services it provides.

This past year, Natorra has taken on the role of managing the Appling County Public Library during the renovation period and beyond. Her dedication, hard work, and love originate from a simple volunteer position at her local

library when she was a high school student.

I thank Natorra for all she does to benefit others.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF BILL ROBERTS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of a dedicated member of our community, as well as a fellow Young Harris alumnus, Bill Roberts of Fayetteville, Georgia.

Bill was the recipient of the Young Harris Medallion, the highest honor that is bestowed by the college for his love and support throughout his years.

Recruited to come to Young Harris as a basketball star, Bill was so much more, serving as a champion debater and officer of both the SPAT clubs and Student Government Association. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics and continued his basketball career at Mercer University, proceeded to Georgia State to earn a business and accounting degree, and finally received a law degree from Woodrow Wilson.

He served our great State of Georgia on the financial side, overseeing massive construction projects like the Georgia Dome and World Congress Center. Bill's expertise was put to use as a trustee of the State's Employees' Retirement System where he served on the Investment Committee and was responsible for investing retirement funds to the humble tune of \$12 billion.

Emeritus trustee for Young Harris, distinguished alumni, veteran, and loved member of our community are just a few of the titles that Bill retained. This is a tremendous loss that will be felt by many.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF PAM SOUTHARD

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of an incredible Georgian, Pam Southard.

Pam has served as the executive director of the Greater Pooler Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau. She has selflessly put her heart and soul into her position and worked to better the city of Pooler in any way that she can.

As the executive director, Pam was instrumental in creating the shuttle system to and from the annual St. Patrick's Day celebration in Savannah. She also founded the annual Hearts for Heroes Gala Fundraiser to help put Pooler, Georgia, on the map. This upscale, black-tie event has sold out for the past 7 years and has been an incredible event for our community.

Throughout her tenure as executive director, Pam has overseen substantial business growth in the city of Pooler, thanks to her guiding hand. Pam has truly been the embodiment of what it means to be a servant to one's community.

Her retirement will leave big shoes to fill, and we will certainly miss her. We are grateful for all that she has done for our great city and wish her the best as she enters a new stage of her life.